

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT M 01009 300716Z
ACTION CPR-02

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UNCLAS PORT MORESBY 1009

CINCPAC FOR POLAD FOR DAVIS

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PDEV, PP
SUBJECT: SOLOMON ISLANDS DELEGATION TRIP TO
PNG VILLAGE

REF: PORT MORESBY 0973

1. EMBOFF VISITED POPONDETTA AND VILLAGE ON THURSDAY WITH
MISSIONARY JIM PARLIER. AS IN REFTEL, PLANS NOW CALL FOR
40 MIN CAR TRIP FOR GROUP B UPON ARRIVAL IN POPONDETTA. GROUP
A WILL TAKE SAME TRIP UPON RETURN FROM VILLAGE.

2. IN POPONDETTA GROUPS WILL SEE MT. LEMINGTON, AN ACTIVE SMOKING
VOLCANO, IN THE DISTANCE. THEY WILL ALSO SEE WORLD WAR II
AIRSTRIPS AND SOME OF THE AREAS WHERE THE BATTLE OF BUNA TOOK
PLACE. THE DRIVE WILL TAKE THEM THROUGH THE TOWN OF
POPONDETTA AND THE AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE. TRADITIONAL HOUSES
AND GARDENS WILL BE SEEN ALONG THE ROAD.

3. THE 11 MIN. FLIGHT TO THE VILLAGE WILL BE OVER SOME OF
THE ROUGHEST LANDSCAPE IN PNG. THERE ARE NO ROADS TO
CONNECT VILLAGE OR AIRSTRIP TO OTHER COMMUNITIES.
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4. DELEGATION WILL BE MET AT AIRSTRIP BY BOTH ADULTS
AND CHILDREN WHO WILL BE HAPPY TO CARRY ANY PERSONNAL
GEAR (CAMERAS, UMBRELLAS, ETC.). THERE WILL BE A 15-30
MIN. WALK TO AN ANGLICAN MISSION WHERE THE SCHOOL
HEADMASTER HAS PROMISED TO ARRANGE FOR EACH GROUP A
SHORT PROGRAM OF TRADITIONAL SONGS AND DANCE.

5. LEAVING THE MISSION, THE GROUP WILL THEN TAKE A 30-45 MIN. WALK TO THE VILLAGE. ALONG THE WAY THEY WILL VISIT A FOODGARDEN AND BE GIVEN A DEMONSTRATION OF TRADITIONAL AGRICULTURAL TECHNIQUES.

6. IN THE VILLAGE THERE WILL BE A FEAST - MOSTLY VEGETABLES COOKED IN THE GROUND - AND PERHAPS MORE DANCING. IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO VISIT SEVERAL HOUSES.

7. THE VILLAGERS HAVE BEEN TOLD THE DELEGATION MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN BUYING SOME TRADITIONAL IMPLEMENTS, SPEARS ETC. WE UNDERSTAND THEY MAY PRESENT SEN. GLENN WITH A DRUM.

8. VILLAGE DESCRIPTION: THE VILLAGE IS A MIXTURE OF TRADITIONAL AND MODERN. IT HAS TWO MISSIONS AND A RURAL EXTENSION WORKER. DRESS IS MOSTLY EUROPEAN BUT THE HOUSES ARE OF THE TRADITIONAL GRASS STYLE. COFFEE IS NOW GROWN AS A CASH CROP BUT TECHNIQUES FOR THE FOOD GARDENS REMAIN PRIMITIVE. MANY OF THE CHILDREN SPEAK ENGLISH. MOST ADULTS DO NOT. SOME TRADITIONAL CEREMONIES ARE STILL PERFORMED. THERE IS AN AIRSTRIP BUT NO ROADS. IT IS A TWO HOUR WALK TO THE NEAREST SMALL PATROL POST AND A DAY'S WALK TO THE NEAREST ROAD TO TAKE ONE TO POPONDETTA.
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9. MANY OF THE ADULTS CLEARLY CANNOT COMPREHEND WHAT IT MEANS TO TRAVEL INTO SPACE. NEVERTHELESS THEY WERE EXCITED BY THE PROSPECT OF GLENN'S VISIT. THEY HAVE FOUR DAYS TO PREPARE AND WE EXPECT THEM TO MAKE A MAJOR EFFORT.

10. THE AMBASSADOR HAS SEVERAL BICENTENNIAL MEDALS THAT CAN BE USED AS GIFTS TO SELECTED VILLAGERS. IF SEN. GLENN HAD THREE OR FOUR SIMILAR MEDALS COMMEMORATING HIS SPACE ACHIEVEMENTS, THEY WOULD PROBABLY BECOME AMONG THE VILLAGE'S MOST HONORED POSSESSIONS.

11. COMPOSITION OF GROUPS A AND B: EMB NOW SUGGESTS THAT GROUP A CONSIST OF DELEGATES WHO FEEL THEY MIGHT TIRE MOST EASILY ON TRAIL. SINCE THEY WILL ARRIVE FIRST, THEY WILL HAVE MORE TIME TO REST ON THE TRAIL. THE TRAIL WILL REQUIRE A WALKING TIME OF 45-60 MINUTES FOR MOST DELEGATES. IT IS NOT PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT EXCEPT FOR A FEW STEEP HILLS WHICH CAN BE MUDDY AFTER A RAIN. FOOTWEAR: HIKING BOOTS OR SHOES ARE PREFERRED FOOTWEAR BUT TENNIS SHOES WITH A SOMEWHAT ROUGH SOLE WILL BE ADEQUATE. DEPT.

SHOULD NOTIFY DELEGATES OF FOOTWEAR REQUIREMENTS
BEFORE THEY FINISH PACKING.
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